High Leverage Practices as a Tool for Teaching and Teacher Education

CEEDAR/IRIS Convening
High Leverage Practices as a Tool for Teaching and Teacher Education

Julie Cohen
University of Virginia
June 23, 2016
Defining Quality Teaching

- The problem of common language
- The challenge of specification
- The challenge of context
  - Subject matter
  - Grade level
  - Student demographics - language, ethnicity, special education status
  - School context
The Search for High Leverage Practices

In 1975, Dan Lortie...argued that the absence of a “common technical vocabulary” limits the ability of novices to access a preexisting body of knowledge regarding teaching. More than 30 years later, the field still lacks a framework of teaching, with well-defined common terms, for describing and analyzing teaching, and researchers, as well as novice teachers, suffer the consequences.  

Grossman & McDonald, 2008
Languages of Practice in other Professions

- Nursing Intervention Classification
- Electrolyte Management
- Airway Management
- Invoking Humor

- Clinical Psychology
- Developing therapeutic relationships with clients
- Expressing empathy
- Responding to resistance
High Leverage Practices

- Research based
- Central to the daily work of teaching
- Central to supporting student learning
- Fundamental to developing other, more complex practice
- Underlie different curricula & approaches to teaching
High Leverage Practices

- Isolated skills/techniques
- Divorced from knowledge/judgment
- The end goal of preparation or professional development
Examples of High Leverage Practices in Teaching

- Modeling cognitive processes for students
- Teaching clear strategies for engaging with academic tasks
- Providing specific feedback that moves student learning forward
Examples of High Leverage Practices in Teaching

- Connecting current academic content to students’ prior knowledge
- Communicating clearly about student progress with a parent or guardian
Challenges in Identifying HLPs?

- How do we “know” something is an HLP?
- What evidence do we use?
- Differential leverage for different goals
One set of HLPs?

- Consensus across education?
  - Case of explicit instruction

- Leverage may vary by....
  - Students
  - School context
  - Content of instruction
Key Ideas

- Practices are learnable

- Teachers can continue to develop their craft around these practices

- Improving practice requires opportunities
  - To see multiple examples of these practices
  - To try out these practices multiple times
  - To get feedback on practice
Practice-Based Teacher Education

- Competency-based teacher education
- Entirely field-based education
- Technique divorced from theory
Practice-Based Teacher Education

- Opportunities to develop principled practice
  - Integration of theory & practice
  - Development of adaptive expertise

- Strong connections to schools
  - Schools as sites for teacher learning
  - Teachers as partners in teacher education

- Identification of core practices for initial teaching

- Multiple and extended opportunities to develop practice
How do We Teach HLPs?

- Representation: Observation of skilled performance
- Decomposition: Unpacking complex practice
- Approximations: Rehearsals & Deliberate practice
Representations of Practice

- Multiple representations of teaching in TE
  - Field experience
  - Videos of teaching
  - Model lessons in TE

- Questions
  - What aspects of teaching are visible?
  - What aspects of teaching are invisible?
Decomposition of Practice

- Breaking complex practice into its constituent parts for the purposes of teaching and learning

- Relies on a grammar of practice”
  - “Naming of parts”

- Identifies components that are integral to practice and can be improved through targeted instruction
What Could Decomposition Look Like?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FeKeM7J0PrE
Towards a Language of Practice

- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

- Reliable classroom observation protocol used in research and professional development (Allen et al., 2011; Hamre & Pianta, 2009)

- Scales that measure aspects of quality teaching - mapped onto core competencies and VDOE standards for professional practice
Towards a Language of Practice

The CLASS

Teacher-Student Interactions

Emotional Support  Classroom Organization  Instructional Support
Productivity considers how well the teacher manages instructional time and routines so that students have the maximum *instructional* time. This scale is intended to capture the degree to which instructional time is effectively managed and down time is minimized for students; it is not a code about the quality of instruction or activities or student engagement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provision of activities</th>
<th>Low (1,2)</th>
<th>Mid (3,4,5)</th>
<th>High (6,7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher does not provide clear tasks for students.</td>
<td>Most of the time there are clear tasks for students but learning time is not consistently maximized.</td>
<td>The teacher consistently provides clear tasks for students and time for learning is maximized.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no evidence of clear, established classroom routines.</td>
<td>Some classroom routines are clearly in place, but there are also times of uncertainty and disorganization.</td>
<td>The classroom resembles a “well-oiled machine” where everybody knows what is expected of them and how to go about doing it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Towards a Language of Practice

- Specific dimensions/practices introduced in coursework
- Examples of high and low quality practice
- Used to assess candidates in field
- Lens for observing and reflecting on practice
- Shorthand for sharing the work of teaching
Approximations of Practice

- Opportunities to try out new instructional routine and core practices in a safe setting

- Opportunities for novices to enact certain parts of practice in a setting removed from full complexity of practice
  - Deliberate practice in the university classroom
    - Use of simulations in medical education
    - Role plays of therapy in clinical psychology
    - Moot court in law schools
Practice for Learning

- Repeated exercise in or performance of an activity or skill so as to acquire or maintain proficiency in it
  - (Oxford English Dictionary)

- “Deliberate practice includes activities that have been specially designed to improve the current level of performance.”
  - 10,000 hours to develop expert level
  - (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Romer, 1993)
Less authentic
- Fewer facets of practice highlighted
- Narrower participation of novice
- Greater opportunity for rehearsal

Engaging in a live role play

Crafting a piece of practice

Analyzing a written case

Enacting the practice with support

More authentic
- More complete representation of practice
- More full participation by novice
- Closer to real time
Questions?
Disclaimer

This content was produced under U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Award No. H325A120003. Bonnie Jones and David Guardino serve as the project officers. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or polices of the U.S. Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned in this website is intended or should be inferred.